



Advanced Degrees

**M.A.**

in Christian Studies

**Ph.D.**

In Christian Theology

# Advanced Degrees Information Book

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## The Advanced Degree Programs at McMaster Divinity College

The Divinity College offers two research-oriented programs within the field of Christian Theology. Both of these degrees are accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), the recognized accrediting body of theological seminaries and graduate schools. These degrees are as follows:

- a. **Master of Arts (M.A. in Christian Studies)** is a research-oriented master's program in Christian Theology (six courses plus thesis). It offers to graduates with an honours undergraduate degree or equivalent in Christian Theology, or a directly related discipline, a coordinated selection of graduate courses and an intensive research thesis. The degree prepares students for doctoral studies and/or leadership roles in church and society.
- b. **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D. in Christian Theology)** is a research-oriented doctoral program in Christian Theology (eight courses plus dissertation). It offers to qualified candidates an opportunity to develop both a broad and formed knowledge and skills through course work and comprehensive examinations, and focused, specialized research in the form of a dissertation that makes an original contribution to the field. The degree prepares students for leadership roles in the academy, church, and society.

### Fields of Study

Students select their area of emphasis within the field of Christian Theology from the following areas. These reflect the specific expertise of the faculty.

Biblical Studies

Theological Studies

Ministry Studies

### Educational Goals of the M.A. in Christian Studies and Ph.D. in Christian Theology

The M.A. in Christian Studies and Ph.D. in Christian Theology degrees are designed to function within the biblical and theological context of a Christian seminary situated at a leading university. The entrance requirements attempt to identify students whose background and academic records indicate the ability to engage in graduate-level study of a theological subject, on the basis of significant previous performance. In particular, these advanced degree programs are designed to encourage:

1. Comprehensive knowledge of theological studies;
2. Original research and writing that advance theological understanding for the sake of the church, academy, and society;
3. Excellence in communication and practice of ministry;
4. Professional skills, character, and leadership.

# THE M.A. PROGRAM

## M.A. Admission Requirements

The normal minimum requirement for admission into the M.A. program is an honours undergraduate degree or equivalent in the field of Christian Theology or a directly related discipline with a B+ average, which includes one year of study of a biblical language.

All applicants must include:

- official copies of transcripts of all post-secondary education.
- your response to the following two questions:
  1. What do you want to accomplish by working for an M.A. in Christian Studies?
  2. Why is McMaster Divinity College the best place for you to develop the above?
- a curriculum vitae that lists your past education, work experience, professional accreditations, publications, ministry and leadership experience, ancient and modern language proficiencies, and honours.
- selection of area of emphasis/examination, providing general topic as well.
- two confidential academic letters of recommendation (see Advanced Degree Reference form).
- name, title and contact information for three additional referees who are willing to speak on your behalf, if contacted.
- where English is not the native language of the applicant, an official copy of a TOEFL score above 580 (or 237 on the computer-based TOEFL test) or equivalent evidence of competence in English.

The deadlines for admission to the M.A. program are June 1 for September admissions and November 15 for January admissions. A late fee is charged for all applications received after the deadline.

## M.A. Course Requirements

In keeping with the program objectives of providing opportunities for advanced study and research in preparation for doctoral studies or other leadership roles in church and society, M.A. candidates will complete at least six (6) half courses at the graduate level, plus a 40,000-word supervised thesis which must be orally defended. (With permission, up to two of the six courses may be 600 level courses.) This will include one course on Research Methods and one interdisciplinary course in addition to four courses in your selected area of emphasis.

<b>MA Program</b>	
<b>Year 1</b>	Research Methods Interdisciplinary Studies in Christian Theology – this can be either Life History of Theology and Ethics or Biblical Theology, or another recognized interdisciplinary course  Four courses in the examination area(s)* Advanced Topics in Biblical Studies Advanced Topics in Theological Studies Advanced Topics in Ministry Studies
<b>Year 2</b>	Thesis - A student writes a thesis of 40,000 words in length, under the supervision of a faculty member, in an area of theological studies. The thesis project is designed to be a major piece of writing that will provide an in-depth foundation for further study or enhanced knowledge and proficiency in a defined area.
<b>TOTAL</b>	6 half courses plus thesis

\*Of the four courses in the examination area please note that two may be enhanced or upgraded 3-unit courses and you are permitted a maximum of one (1) Directed Study and one (1) Letter of Permission

# THE Ph.D. PROGRAM

## Ph.D. Admission Requirements

The minimum entrance requirements are as follows:

1. B.A. or equivalent from an accredited university or its educational equivalent, normally with at least a B+ average;
2. Master's level degree from an accredited university or its educational equivalent, normally with at least a B+ average (students emphasizing Ministry Studies will normally have a M.Div. degree);
3. Students will normally have at least ten term-long courses (equivalent to one full year) in the area of emphasis selected for study, or related areas, with at least a B+ average in these courses;
4. A major piece of written academic work, preferably a thesis written at the master's level, but in limited cases, an essay or equivalent of no less than 10,000 words. This written work must be relevant to the proposed field of study, must be written recently by the student in English, and must demonstrate the student's academic competence, including the ability to sustain proper argumentation, and to interact with a depth and breadth of primary and secondary literature with proper documentation;
5. Knowledge of the appropriate modern and ancient languages (see Languages below);
6. Some students may be admitted with deficiencies in the above areas, but these deficiencies must be made up before the beginning of the second academic year. Until such deficiencies are made up, students are admitted to conditional status.
7. Interview. Students will normally be interviewed, either by telephone or in person, by McMaster Divinity College as a part of the admission process.

All applicants must include:

- official copies of transcripts of all post-secondary education.
- your response to the following two questions:
  1. What do you want to accomplish by working for a Ph.D. in Christian Theology?
  2. Why is McMaster Divinity College the best place for you to develop the above?
- a curriculum vitae that lists your past education, work experience, professional accreditations, publications, ministry and leadership experience, ancient and modern language proficiencies, and honours.
- two confidential academic letters of recommendation (see Advanced Degree Reference form).
- name, title and contact information for three additional referees who are willing to speak on your behalf, if contacted.
- selection of area of emphasis/examination and the area(s) you are contemplating for your dissertation.
- copy of your thesis (or written work).
- where English is not the native language of the applicant, an official copy of a TOEFL score above 580 (or 237 on the computer-based TOEFL test) or equivalent evidence of competence in English.

Applicants wishing to be considered for financial aid, scholarships and teaching assistantships must have submitted their application before January 15. Applications received after that date may not be guaranteed financial assistance. Entrance to the P.D. program is only permitted in September.

## Ph.D .Course Requirements

In keeping with the objective of providing Ph.D. students with opportunities to develop a breadth of knowledge and skills through coursework and comprehensive examinations, as well as focused, specialized research in the form of a dissertation, the following list comprises the minimum requirements for the program. (With permission, up to two of the eight courses may be 600 level courses.)

Ph.D. Program	
<b>Year 1</b>	Research Methods  Two courses: Interdisciplinary Studies in Christian Theology  One course in the selected examination area(s): Advanced Topics in Biblical Studies Advanced Topics in Theological Studies Advanced Topics in Ministry Studies
<b>Year 2</b>	Two courses in the selected examination area(s): Advanced Topics in Biblical Studies Advanced Topics in Theological Studies Advanced Topics in Ministry Studies  Two courses: Directed Studies in the Examination area(s) (or two courses in the examination area)  <i>(Comprehensive examinations written at end of year two)</i>
<b>Year 3 &amp; 4</b>	Dissertation
<b>TOTAL</b>	8 half courses plus dissertation

The seminars are offered according to the interests and expertise of the professors and designed to provide doctoral level study within the areas of emphasis. The form of delivery, which utilizes the traditional semester/term format, is designed to create and develop a stimulating intellectual environment in which students are exposed to the major issues during seminars, have sufficient time to come to terms with the subject matter both individually and in dialogue with others, and then present the results of their reflection through presentations and further synthetic dialogue.

## Ph.D. Evaluation Procedures

### Supervision:

From the outset, as part of the admission process, students work with a primary supervisor whose expertise and scholarly interests correspond with the student's area of emphasis. The supervisory committee consists of the primary supervisor, a secondary supervisor, the Dean or designate, and any other members from inside or outside of the College as deemed appropriate.

The duties of the Ph.D. supervisory committee are as follows:

- to assist in planning and to approve the student's program of courses and research;
- to approve the thesis proposal (normally to be submitted by the end of term 1 of year 2);
- to decide, within the College's regulations, on the timing of the comprehensive examinations and, when applicable, of the language examinations;
- to maintain knowledge of the student's research activities and progress;

- to give advice on research, usually through the student's primary supervisor;
- to provide the student with regular appraisals of progress;
- to perform such other duties as may be required by the College,
- to report on the above matters annually;
- to initiate appropriate action if the student's progress is unsatisfactory, including any recommendation that the student withdraw, for approval by the College;
- and to decide when the student is to write the dissertation and give advice during this process.

### **Courses:**

All seminars and directed studies are given letter grades based on some combination of essays, presentations, and major research papers. Those students entering the Ph.D. program who have already completed approved designated courses may substitute other courses or directed studies.

### **Progress evaluations:**

All doctoral students are evaluated yearly in a progress report detailing the achievements of the previous year and the objectives for the next year. Permission to continue to register in the program is dependent upon a satisfactory report.

### **Comprehensive examinations:**

Students will undertake comprehensive examinations, both written and oral, in one or more examination area (Biblical Studies, Theological Studies, or Ministry Studies). The examination will consist of at least three separate written components and an oral component. The examinations are set and evaluated by the supervisory committee on the basis of previously agreed-upon reading lists. They are graded as pass/fail. Each student may re-take a single failed component once.

### **Dissertation:**

A candidate must present a dissertation, which embodies the results of original research and mature scholarship. The dissertation will normally be 80,000 to 100,000 words in length. The dissertation must be coherently argued on a topic that demonstrates scholarly research skills and knowledge of the field of Christian Theology and its critical practices and traditions. The dissertation will provide either an original contribution to knowledge or a significant reframing of the issues or topics in question. Formulation of the topic should begin during the Research Methods course at which time guidance in dissertation research is provided.

Before submitting the dissertation for oral examination, the student must be authorized to do so by the primary and secondary supervisors. Each dissertation must include an abstract of not more than 300 words. Candidates must defend the dissertation in an oral examination not less than two hours in length. The examining committee will consist of the supervisory committee as well as an external examiner who will be present for the examination. The external examiner will be a recognized expert in the area of research at arm's length from the student and College. Each member of the committee is a voting member with voice. The results of the examination may be a pass (with or without minor corrections), a pass with minor revisions, resubmission after major revisions (with or without new oral defence), or failure. Resubmission may result in a pass (with or without minor corrections) or a failure with no further submissions allowed. After a successful defence, the candidate must submit five bound copies to the College. The fee for binding and other costs are paid by the student. One copy of the bound thesis goes to the primary supervisor, one copy to the College, one copy to the University library, one copy to the National Library and one copy to the student.

### **Vocational Practice:**

Vocational practice creates meaningful intellectual and reflective interaction between the area of emphasis and one's chosen vocation. It is required in each term of coursework.

### **Languages**

Students are required to use the languages necessary for their course of study, in order to handle both primary and secondary sources. The normal entrance requirement is that a student would have at least 9 units (three terms) of one biblical language for emphasis in Ministry Studies, and at least 12 units (four terms) of one biblical language for Biblical Studies or Theological Studies, and at least one modern research language, such as German or French

(normally a minimum of two years of formal university training). The student may be required to gain facility in additional languages or higher competence in the biblical or modern languages in the light of their program of study as set by their committee. For example, those students who wish to emphasize Biblical Studies would normally have studied at least four terms of their major biblical language and probably at least two terms of the other. Competence in modern languages is to be demonstrated through a language examination set by the primary or secondary advisors or other suitable person at McMaster Divinity College (normally a one-hour reading and translation examination) and is to be decided by the committee of advisors.

## Faculty

### Core Faculty

#### Stanley E. Porter

##### President and Dean, Professor of New Testament

*B.A. Point Loma College, San Diego, California, M.A. Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, California, M.A. Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois, Ph.D. University of Sheffield, England*

Stan has taught for twenty years in post-secondary institutions in Canada, the USA, and the UK. His publications include eleven authored books and over 100 authored journal articles; he has also edited over 40 volumes. He remains a well-known and respected expert in Greek and New Testament studies throughout the world, and has a vision for the College to become a first choice seminary of academic excellence and exemplary leadership training. He is actively involved in [OpenText.org](http://OpenText.org) and the Linguistics Institute for Ancient and Biblical Greek ([www.liabg.org](http://www.liabg.org)).

#### Joyce E. Bellous

##### Associate Professor of Lay Empowerment and Discipleship

*B.A. University of Alberta, Edmonton, B.Ed. University of Calgary, M.A. University of Calgary, Ph.D. University of Alberta, Edmonton*

Joyce has been with the College since 1993. She is a passionate educational expert who teaches in the area of religious education and ministry education, while also serving as the Director of the Parish Nurse Institute. As a prolific speaker and writer, Joyce addresses issues of spirituality, ethics, postmodernism, multiculturalism, and the education of children.

#### Mark Boda

##### Professor of Old Testament

*B.Th. Canadian Bible College, M.Div. Westminster Theological Seminary, Ph.D. University of Cambridge*

Mark joined the College in 2003 after teaching for ten years at Canadian Theological Seminary, Saskatchewan. He has published significant works on penitential prayer and the books of Haggai-Zechariah, and teaches with enthusiasm about the Old Testament and its continued relevance to the Christian life today.

#### Gordon Heath

##### Assistant Professor of Church History

*B.Th. Tyndale University College, M.Div. (Honours) Acadia University, Ph.D. University of St. Michael's College*

Gordon joined us in the summer of 2004 after five years teaching history at Tyndale University College. His research interests lie particularly in the area of church/state and church/war issues. Besides teaching at the College, he also serves as Director of the Canadian Baptist Archives.

#### Michael P. Knowles

##### Associate Professor of Preaching; George F. Hurlburt Chair in Preaching

*B.A. (Hon.) University of Victoria, British Columbia, M.Div. Wycliffe College, Toronto, Th.D. University of Toronto*

As an ordained minister with the Anglican Church of Canada, Michael teaches courses in both Christian ministry and biblical studies in a way that integrates ministry application with sound biblical exegesis. He has published a book on Matthew's Gospel, as well as a number of adult education resources and articles.

### **James Peterson**

#### **Professor of Theology and Ethics; Roy A. Hope Chair in Theology, Ethics and Christian Worldview**

*B.A. Northwestern University, M.Div. Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, M.A. University of Iowa, Ph.D. University of Virginia*

Jim has taught extensively in the area of ethics and theology in both religious and secular institutions in the U.S. and overseas. In his teaching, he challenges students to apply faith issues to real-world ethical situations. He has received two Templeton awards for his contribution to the field of theology, ethics and science, and has recently published a book on the ethics of human genetic intervention.

### **Wendy Porter**

#### **Director of Music and Worship**

*B.A. Trinity Western University, Ph.D. University of Surrey*

Wendy is the Director of Music and Worship at the Divinity College and teaches courses in Christian ministry, particularly in the areas of sacred music, liturgics, and worship. Her research and publications explore the interface of theology and church music from the early church to the present.

### **Steven M. Studebaker**

#### **Assistant Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology**

*B.A. Northwest College, M.A. Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Ph.D. Marquette University*

Steve Studebaker has taught for three years at Emmanuel College in Georgia before coming to McMaster Divinity College to take up the theology position in July 2006. He has also taught courses at Marquette University and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. His research interests include Jonathan Edwards, David Coffey, and pneumatology.

### **Cynthia Long Westfall**

#### **Assistant Professor of New Testament**

*B.A. Biola College, M.A. Northern Arizona University, M.Div. Denver Seminary, Ph.D. University of Surrey*

Cindy has published in the area of discourse analysis of the New Testament and is a recognized expert on the book of Hebrews. Her first book on Hebrews and its form and meaning appeared this year. Cindy has taught previously at Mars Hill Graduate School, Denver Seminary and Colorado Christian University.

### **Adjunct Faculty**

**Keith Bodner** B.A., M.C.S., Ph.D., Ph.D., adjunct professor and professor in Old Testament at Atlantic Baptist University

**Janet Clark** B.A., B.S.W., M.S.W., Ph.D., adjust professor and associate professor in counseling and academic dean of Tyndale Seminary

**Claude E. Cox** B.A., M.Div., Th.M., M.A., Ph.D., adjunct professor in Old Testament and Hebrew

**Craig A. Evans** B.A., M.Div., M.A., Ph.D., adjunct professor and Payzant Distinguished Professor in New Testament at Acadia Divinity College

**Hans Förster** B.A., M.A., D.Theol., adjunct professor and Research Fellow of the Austrian Academy of Sciences

**Malcolm J.A. Horsnell** B.A., B.D., Th.M., Ph.D., professor emeritus of Old Testament

**Matthew Brook O'Donnell** B.Sc., M.Div, Ph.D., adjust professor in New Testament and principal partner of the OpenText.org project

**James Payton** B.A., M.A., M.Div., Ph.D., adjunct professor and professor of history at Redeemer University College

**Clark H. Pinnock** B.A., Ph.D., professor emeritus of systematic theology

**Mark Steinacher** B.A., M.Div., Th.M., Th.D., adjunct professor in Christian history

**Das Sydney** B.Sc., M.Div., M.Th., D.Min., adjunct professor in Christian ministry

## **Courses**

There is one pro-seminar required of all students. It should be taken preferably in the first term of study. Most of the seminars have broad generic names, with the content to be supplied in the individual instance of being taught, so they may be repeated with different content.

### **Research and Practicum Methods**

Description: This course will examine the nature of research and explore various research designs and methodologies applicable to research at the doctoral level. It includes library, archival, community-based and textually-based research methods. The research methodologies discussed will be pertinent for course work as well as providing the basis for dissertation writing. Yearly

### **Interdisciplinary Studies in Christian Theology**

Description: Selected topics that cross at least two areas of program emphasis. This doctoral course may be repeated for credit as topics change in different years. Topics include:

- A Life History of Christian Theology and Ethics
- Biblical Theology

### **Advanced Topics in Biblical Studies**

Description: Selected topics in Biblical Studies will be offered yearly on a regular rotation. This doctoral course may be repeated for credit as topics change in different years. Topics include:

- Advanced Greek Grammar
- Greek Language and Linguistics
- Hebrew Language and Linguistics
- New Testament Texts
- Old Testament Texts
- Contemporary Approaches to Biblical Studies
- Contemporary Hermeneutics

### **Advanced Topics in Theological Studies**

Description: Selected topics in Theological Studies will be offered yearly on a regular rotation. This doctoral course may be repeated for credit as topics change in different years. Topics include:

- The Cross
- Practices of Christian Historiography
- Reformation Studies
- History of Christianity in Canada
- Advanced Issues in Theological Ethics

### **Advanced Topics in Ministry Studies**

Description: Selected topics in Ministry Studies will be offered yearly on a regular rotation. This doctoral course may be repeated for credit as topics change in different years. Topics include:

- Biblical Interpretation for Preaching
- Theology and Practice of Worship
- Church and Culture
- Conciliation and Conflict Transformation
- Spirituality and Religious Education
- Teaching in Christian Higher Education

### **Directed Studies**

Description: A course designed or selected by the student's faculty advisor/mentor to develop the student's emphasis. M.A. students may take a maximum of one directed study in their program. Doctoral students generally take two directed studies.